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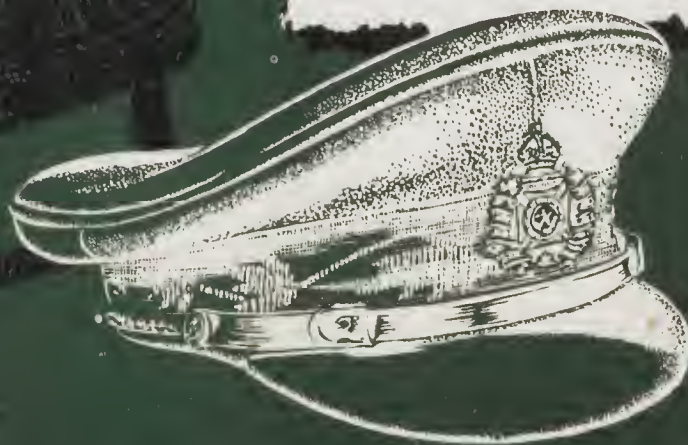


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*Seventy-fifth*  
**anniversary**



**ROYAL  
WINNIPEG  
RIFLES  
1883 - 1958**





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Prairie Provinces Collection

75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

ROYAL  
WINNIPEG  
RIFLES





# Royal Winnipeg Rifles

## Battle Honors of the Regiment

Fish Creek  
Batoche  
North West Canada 1885  
South Africa 1899-1900  
Ypres 1915-1917  
Gravenstafel  
St. Julien  
Festubert 1915  
Mount Sorrel  
Somme 1916  
Thiepval  
Ancre Heights  
Arras 1917-1918  
Vimy 1917  
Arleux  
Hill 70  
Passchendaele  
Amiens  
Scarpe 1918  
Drocourt-Queant  
Hindenburg Line  
Canal du Nord  
Pursuit to Mons  
France & Flanders 1915-1918

Normandy Landing  
Putot-en-Bessin  
Caen  
Carpiquet  
The Orne  
Bourguébus Ridge  
Falaise  
The Laison  
The Seine  
Calais 1944  
The Scheldt  
Leopold Canal  
Breskens Pocket  
The Rhineland  
Waal Flats  
Moyland Wood  
The Rhine  
Emerich-Hoch Elten  
Deventer  
North-West Europe  
1944-1945



*Field Marshal H.R.H. The DUKE of GLOUCESTER*

*K.G., K.T., K.P., G.M.B., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O.*

*(Colonel-in-Chief)*



YORK HOUSE,  
ST JAMES'S PALACE.

11<sup>th</sup> June, 1958.

Dear Col. Johnston,

I write, as your Colonel-in-Chief, to congratulate All Ranks on the celebration of the 75th Anniversary of the Regiment.

You may be justly proud of your history as the oldest Regiment in Western Canada. Your Battle Honours go back to Fish Creek, and your nickname - The Little Black Devils - is now world-famous.

In the last war after taking part in the Normandy landings the Regiment was in the battle for Caen and fought its way through France, Belgium and Holland to Germany, thus adding new Battle Honours to those made famous in previous years.

I am confident that the Regiment will maintain the traditions of the past, and wish it every success in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Henry.



LT.-COL. W. A. JOHNSTON QC  
*Honorary Colonel  
Appointed 1953*





LT.-COL. C. S. PLATTS, CD, Order of the Bronze Lion (Netherlands)  
Commanding Officer. Appointed 1953.

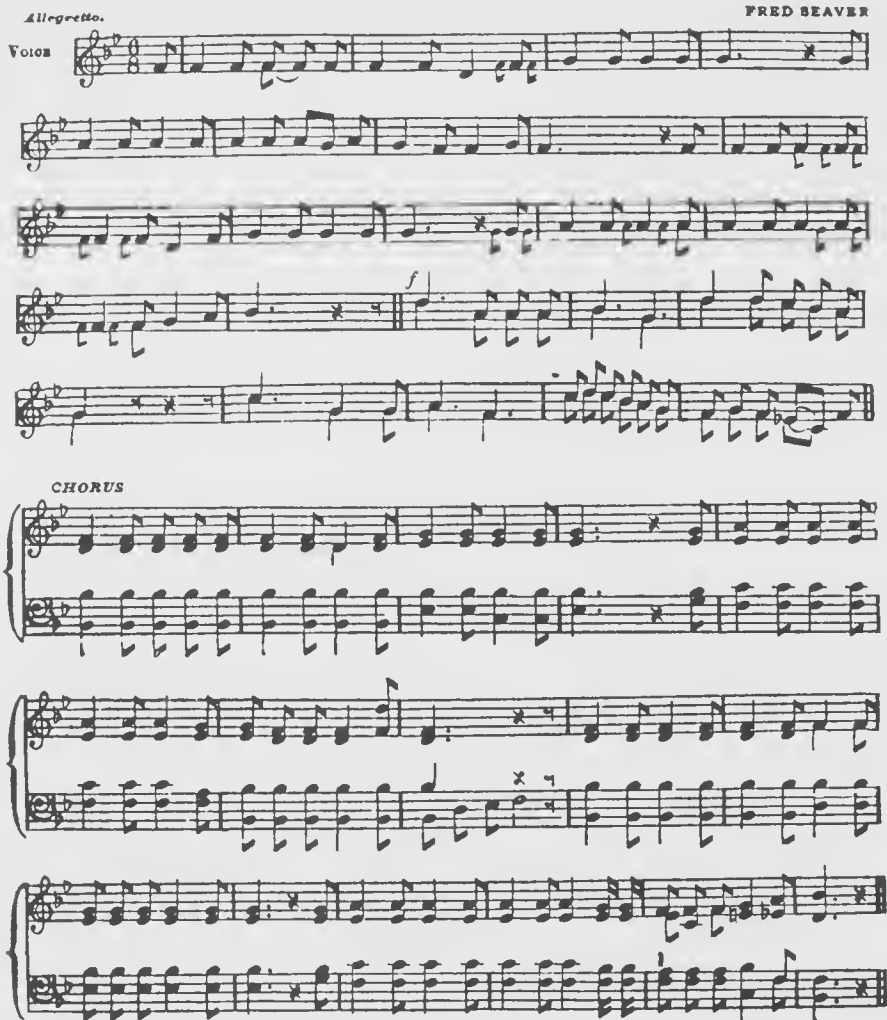
# THE REGIMENTAL MARCH

*Written by Major Lawrence Buchan*

## "PORK, BEANS AND HARD TACK"

*Allegretto.* FRED SEEVER

Voies



CHORUS

When we embarked at Winnipeg, as chirpy as could be,  
We thought we were out for a bit of a lark, about a two weeks spree,  
But when we got to Fort Qu'Appelle we found it different then,  
Our tents in a row, we pitched in the snow, just like the real soldier men.

### CHORUS

Pork, beans, hard tack, tra, la, la, la, la, la, la,  
Poor hungry soldiers, tra, la, la, la, la, la, la, la, la,  
With blistered feet and aching bones we march along all day,  
And go on picquet all the night, to keep the rebs away;  
But when we meet the enemy we do not think of rest,  
For whether we march or fight, my boys, we do our level best.



# PREFACE

The story of the Rampant Devil — one of Canada's most famous military insignia — constitutes, in capsule form, the history of the Canadian Northwest, both in its domestic development and its role in international affairs. From the unsettling times when Manitoba first emerged as a province, and Winnipeg as a city, the history of the Regiment has been closely identified with this new part of a new land. In its brief 75 years it has served in five wars — the relief of Khartoum, the Northwest Rebellion, the South African War and the two World Wars — and in the peacetime alliance of NATO; through individual members of the unit it has been represented in the Korean War, and as a unit was involved in the civil disorders of 1906 and 1919, and in the great Winnipeg flood of 1950.

The Regiment is the west's oldest infantry militia unit and its second oldest law-enforcement body, preceded ten years earlier by the North West Mounted Police.

Wherever the sign of the Rampant Devil has been carried there are tales of unquestioned patriotism, bravery and sheer skill-at-arms that have caught the imagination of all who have met, known, loved — and fought against — the men of the Little Black Devils. The badge is proudly worn, and rightly so, for the "Men of the 90th" are citizen-soldiers with a tradition of bold duty.

The events in which the Regiment took part are no mean ones. It played a major role in ensuring that Canada remained, in fact, a Dominion from Sea to Sea. In the bitter fighting on the pivotal point of Gravenstafel Ridge during the Second Battle of Ypres in 1915, the Regiment — alone — withstood gas and shell to save the vital channel ports. In World War Two it was in the spearhead of the great seaborne assault landing on the Atlantic Wall, the greatest combined operation in history.

"Hosti Acie Nominati" — Named by the Enemy in Battle. A stirring tribute to a great Regiment.





# *Birth* OF THE DEVILS

The 90th Winnipeg Battalion of Rifles came into being November 9, 1883, born of a troubled 14-year gestation period that had its seeds in the 1869 provisional government of Louis Riel and the 1871 Fenian raids that alarmed the frontier community of Winnipeg. The Canadian Pacific Railway was pushing its steel across the Dominion to give a practical meaning to the Dominion from Atlantic to Pacific, and in its wake came hundreds of settlers, flocking to a new land. Alarmed Metis, fearing that their homesteads were being threatened with confiscation under new survey regulations, and seeing the encroachment of a new era that placed their old ways in jeopardy, were restless.

All this spelt a need for protection and security for Winnipeg. The City's second mayor, William Nassan Kennedy, a veteran of the 1871 Fenian Raid and an experienced infantry and artillery officer, went to Ottawa in 1883 as emissary to get permission to organize a militia regiment in the city of 16,000. On November 9th of that same year, the 90th Winnipeg Battalion of Rifles was gazetted, with Lieutenant-Colonel Kennedy as its first Commanding Officer. The organization was swift; one week later the first parade was held in a skating rink on what is now Lombard Street.

The roster of officers of Manitoba's first full battalion, as listed in the general order of November 9, 1883, contains names that shaped the history of the unit for years to come: one of them forecast an event to take place 70 years later. That person was a senior major in the first gazetted — Daniel Hunter McMillan, later lieutenant-governor of Manitoba and the

organizer and first Commanding Officer of the 91st Light Infantry (Winnipeg Light Infantry) which served in the Northwest Rebellion and in 1953 amalgamated with the Royal Winnipeg Rifles, bringing a fuller tradition to the Little Black Devils.

There were six companies in all in those early beginnings, organized on a competitive basis, with No. 1 Company composed of merchants, No. 2 of engineers and surveyors, No. 3 of lawyers, No. 4 of Englishmen, No. 5 of university men and No. 6 of Scotchmen. Two companies were added later, and this eight-company formation persisted until the early days of 1915 on Salisbury Plains, when the four-company platoon system of the Imperial Army was adopted.

Those first officers were men with a sense of great public duty. In addition to Col. Kennedy and D. H. (later Sir Daniel) McMillan, the six company commanders were Captains C. F. Forrest, H. N. Ruttan, W. A. Wilkes, A. J. D. Blyth, William Murdoch and William Clark with Capt. C. M. Boswell as adjutant, G. T. Orton as Surgeon, J. W. Whiteford as Assistant Surgeon, H/Capt. A. H. Whitehler as paymaster and H/Capt. Herbert Swinford as quartermaster. Very quickly new names were added: Hugh John (later Sir Hugh) Macdonald, a premier of Manitoba and son of Canada's first Prime Minister; Alfred Mackeand, J. W. deC O'Grady and H. W. Chambré.



## The Nile Campaign

As the Regiment formed, request for its services came from an unexpected quarter: Lord Kitchener, fighting the fanatical Derwishes (Mahdists) in the upper reaches of the Nile, asked for a contingent of Canadian voyageurs to assist in the relief of General Gordon at Khartoum. Col. Kennedy in 1884 led the Winnipeg contingent — the first to serve beyond the shores of North America. He died on the homeward journey in London.

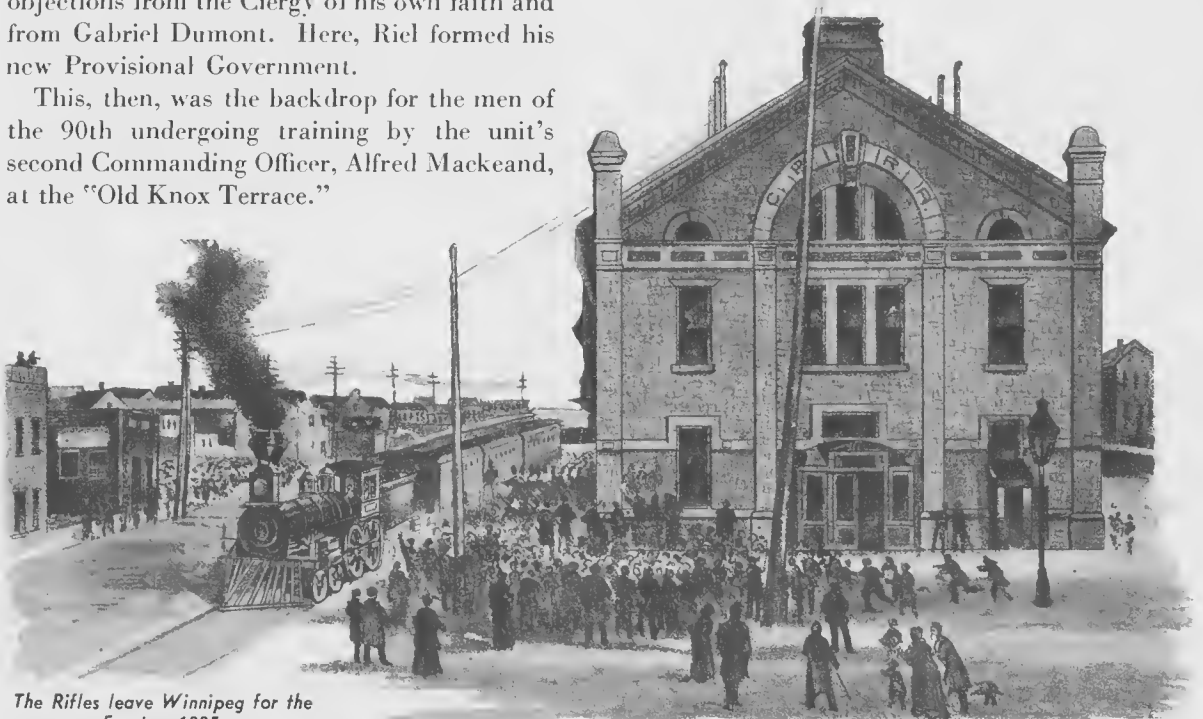
## The Northwest Rebellion

While the first group of servicemen from the Regiment were in Egypt, trouble at home was increasing. Louis Riel, who had been teaching at St. Peter's Mission in Montana after fleeing Manitoba over a decade earlier, was asked by Gabriel Dumont to return and help his food-scarce people. He arrived at St. Laurent (Batoche) July 1, 1884, and while his first words counselled moderation, Batoche soon became an armed camp. This was done over objections from the Clergy of his own faith and from Gabriel Dumont. Here, Riel formed his new Provisional Government.

This, then, was the backdrop for the men of the 90th undergoing training by the unit's second Commanding Officer, Alfred Mackeand, at the "Old Knox Terrace."

The training was quickly put to use. In March, 1885, came word that Riel had imprisoned the Indian agent and other white men at Batoche. That same month — the 25th — Major Boswell, Capt. Ruttan and 100 men left for Troy (Qu'Appelle), nearest rail point to Prince Albert, with the balance of the Regiment leaving two days later with General Middleton. From then on, it was campaigning of a rigorous nature: housing in bleak weather in immigration sheds at Troy, the start of a gruelling 325-mile march on April 6th through snow and blizzard, with pork, beans and hard-tack their diet and resting in "tents in a row . . . pitched in the snow," on past Clark's Crossing on April 17 and ending, on April 23, 1885, with the famous Battle of Fish Creek.

Here was the first real encounter with the enemy, and from 5 a.m. until dark of that single day the Regiment fought without food or drink. To them went the brunt of the fighting in the advance on the "rebel" trenches. It was



*The Rifles leave Winnipeg for the Front — 1885.*

here that captured prisoners, awed by the cool, steady advance of the sharp-shooting Rifles, said afterwards: "The 'red-coats' we know, but who are those little black devils?"

General Middleton lost no time in referring in subsequent despatches to the Rifles as "Little Black Devils," and newspaper correspondents did full justice to "Middleton's Little Black Devils." Later came official recognition of the name, and wearers of the collar badge with the Rampant Devil have ranged in name and fame with the world's most illustrious soldiers.

Two weeks after the first engagement, the Rifles joined in the final four-day assault on Batoche, and from May 7 to 11 completed the job by driving the enemy from the little capital of their new Provisional Government. To the Rifles went the task of forming Riel's guard when he was taken to Regina for trial. It was commanded by Capt. George H. Young and included Rev. Dr. C. B. Pitblado, afterwards minister at Westminster Church, Winnipeg.

In all, the unit travelled 575 miles by foot, 325 by rail and 1,000 by river and lake boat to wipe out the Metis threat of establishing a republic in Canada's northwest. And to the unit, on its return to Winnipeg, came the grateful thanks of a now-secure populace. There were triumphal arches, crowds upon crowds of cheering citizens, a big banquet and ball and — best of all — an enthusiasm amongst the veterans and new, young citizens, to keep up the traditions of the Regiment.

*The first Armoury  
in Western Canada, built in 1884  
for the Winnipeg Rifles  
and occupied until 1918.*

*A grateful city  
unveils  
VOLUNTEER MONUMENT  
at City Hall,  
28 Sep., 1886.*

*The 90th L.B.D.'s  
returning from  
Riel Rebellion,  
July, 1885.*



*The Battle  
of Fish Creek.*

*The capture  
of Batoche.*



*Typical dress  
of a Rifleman  
of this period.*



## The Boer War

In the first "post-war" period, the hard-training Regiment, under Lt.-Col. C. M. Boswell, who succeeded to command on the death in February, 1887, of Col. Mackeand, maintained a high level of efficiency. His passion, the records show, was to make the Regiment the very best that training could produce. Such was the state of training that within a day after the South African war was launched by the Boers in October, 1899, Lt.-Col. H. N. Ruttan (who succeeded Col. Boswell in 1895) was able to offer the services of the Regiment. While 500 were prepared to go, the Canadian contingent was not large. In all, 250 men of the 90th served in the South African war as a company of the Royal Canadian Regiment. The same year, the Earl of Minto, known to many in his capacity as chief-of-staff to Gen. Middleton in 1885, became the honorary colonel of the Regiment. And the same year saw the "Pork, Beans and Hard Tack" march, written by Northwest Rebellion veteran Major "Larry" Buchan, authorized as the Regimental March.

An earlier history had this to say: "It is a song that has been heard on three continents on prairie, veldt, and in the mud of Flanders. Camp-fire and dug-out have brightened to its tune, and weary men have straightened pack-burdened shoulders and found new life to lift leaden feet at the cheering sound of its familiar words. Today the melody of that soldiers' song lingers in the hearts of ten thousand veterans to remind them of other, more stirring days and the camaraderie of trail and trench."

## Years of Peace

Post-war period No. 2 saw the unit undertaking a happy mixture of training, ceremonials and military get-togethers. In 1900 Major H.W.A. Chambré succeeded Col. Ruttan. The same year the unit was invited, under arms, to foreign territory, spending two days at Fargo as guests of the local Militia. And five years later, in September 1905, 350 of the unit went to Regina for the inauguration of the



LT.-COL. H. N. RUTTAN

*Commanding Officer  
at time of  
South African War.*

province of Saskatchewan, the territory where the Regiment first went into battle as a full unit.

The next year, shortly after Major T. H. Billman assumed command, the Regiment was called out in aid of the civil power. The April 1906, Electric Railway strike had assumed riotous proportions, and the Regiment quickly checked destruction of rolling stock. This was not the first time the unit was called out to aid the civil power. In one of its first functions as a new regiment — on October 31, 1884 — the Regiment was ordered out under arms because of the threatened mobbing of the attorney general Hon. Mr. Miller, who had ordered a prisoner to be flogged for persistent prison-breaking. Guards were mounted overnight at the legislative building. Nor would it be the last time the unit would aid civil authorities.

Of the 1906 occurrence, an earlier history noted that the call to aid the civil power, "while devoid of any spectacular element, proved to the citizens the value of maintaining in the city a well-trained, efficient militia unit."

Perhaps in this era of lightning wars and civil defence requirements a well-trained citizenry is of even greater importance. Members of the Regiment should note with pride the past ability of the unit to respond immediately to the call of duty. In the Khartoum expedition, the response was immediate; in the North West Rebellion, the unit was entrained the same month that Riel captured the whites at Batoche, and the following month, after a grim late-winter march, was in action; the day after the opening of the Boer war, a contingent from the unit was ready to go.



The same high state of training preceded the First World War. Lt.-Col. J. W. deC O'Grady, who in 1911 succeeded Col. Billman, and who himself was an excellent marksman, was credited with developing a particularly high standard of marksmanship in the Regiment.

One chapter in this brief history is devoted to the shooting success of the Regiment.

All training was kept to a high peak as troubled Europe drew closer and closer to the brink of a disastrous war.

# WORLD WAR ONE



The fateful years were at hand. On the evening of August 2, while the Regiment marched at full strength through Winnipeg streets, as was its habit, with the band playing "Pork, Beans and Hardtack," newsboys dashed along the line of march with extras, announcing Europe was aflame with war. Within two days, Great Britain's "evacuate Belgium" ultimatum brought the Empire into the conflict.

"No one who was present at the old drill hall on Broadway," recounts an earlier history, "will ever forget the fateful 4th of August when Colonel O'Grady entered and spoke to the members of the Regiment who were assembled awaiting news of impending developments.

"'Ninetieth Winnipeg Rifles,' he said, 'I have offered the Regiment not only full strength but one thousand strong. Who goes?' The reply was . . . a spontaneous outburst of patriotic enthusiasm . . ."

By Tuesday night, August 6th, the 90th was in camp at St. Charles, one of the first Canadian units to be under canvas and training for active service. The Regiment, designated in the C.E.F. as the "8th Canadian Battalion, 90th Winnipeg Rifles," was on its way to Valcartier on August 24th — less than three weeks after the outbreak of war. Here, Col. O'Grady, in ill health (he died just over two months later) relinquished command to Major L. J. Lipsett, who took the Regiment into action.

Meanwhile, the "home" Battalion was taken over by Major C. F. Blanchard — in the absence in England of the senior officer, Major W. A. Munro — who proceeded to build it up so quickly that in all over 11,000 men passed through the Regimental depot, half going to the 8th and the remainder to four new and complete overseas battalions under battle-tested officers — the 2nd Battalion, 90th Overseas Battalion under Col. Munro, the 114th under Lt.-Col. A. W. Morley, M.C.; the 190th under Lt.-Col. G. K. W. Watson and the 203rd under Lt.-Col. J. E. Hansford. It also provided two double companies for the 27th City of Winnipeg active service battalion, one company for the 14th and one for the 61st.

## Ypres, 1915

For the 8th, the days from the disembarkation at Plymouth, October 17, 1914, the training on Salisbury Plains over a wet winter, and the move, a platoon at a time, into quiet sectors of the western front to accustom them to trench routine, was a prelude to the April 14th, 1915, entry into the Ypres salient where, in the first real baptism under fire, it showed to the world that the Little Black Devils were a force second to none.

Here, then is the story of an ordeal that will be remembered as long as military feats-of-arms are recounted: the story of the 8th Battalion at the Second Battle of Ypres:

"A journey by bus to Vlamertinghe and a march through stately Ypres brought the Battalion into the trenches near St. Julien on the evening of April 14th, where they relieved the French and where, in the words of General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, 'the enemy was always truculent.'"

"On the left of the 2nd Brigade was the 3rd Brigade, and on the right was the 28th British Division. The trenches were in poor condition, traverses non-existent, parapets no protection except from view, and in many cases no paradoss at all. For three days and three nights all ranks laboured to improve their defences.

"Then came the disturbing news on the night of April 22nd, that the French on the left of 3rd Brigade had been forced out of their trenches by an enemy gas attack. Through the gap poured the Germans in their thousands, and it became immediately necessary for the 3rd Brigade, with its left 'in the air', greatly to extend its line and throw back its left flank southward to protect its rear. The 8th Battalion was left at the spearhead of a dangerous salient, and for four days the Little Black Devils endured a rain of shells from front, flank and rear.

"At four o'clock on the morning of Saturday, April 24th, a blue-green-yellowish cloud was seen rolling over No-Man's Land towards the Battalion trenches. It was the second enemy gas attack, and in a few minutes the 8th had its first experience of this ghastly new weapon of modern warfare. The effect was paralyzing! Half the Battalion succumbed to the poisonous fumes! The Battalion on the left was obliged to retire and the 8th found itself in danger of being surrounded. But they held on, maintaining their proud record of never having lost a trench. While supporting battalions were preparing new defences in their rear, the men of the Ninetieth kept up a withering fire on the enemy, drove off an attack on their front and withstood a fearful enfilade fire from left and right.

"It was at this particular juncture when exhausted men fought against weariness, shell, gas and an enemy outnumbering the little garrison five to one, that a query came from Headquarters, asking how the 8th was faring and if the position could be maintained. Colonel Lipsett consulted his company Commanders, saw his Battalion standing to arms, eyes heavy, lips cracked, bodies racked but with spirits unconquerable. He sent back his reply: 'The 90th can hold its bit!' And hold it they did!

*The Second Battle of Ypres,  
where the 8th Battalion  
"was the focal point of saving the Channel ports  
and removing  
the danger to England of invasion."*



"With the early morning of the 25th came relieving troops from the Durham Light Infantry, but only for three companies of the Battalion. No. 4 Company, on the right, under Captain George Northwood, saw their relief start forward and then turn back. As the day wore on and the battle continued in intensity, the Durhams were seen gradually falling back. By six o'clock there were no troops left in the front line except No. 1 Company and the Machine Gun Section of the Battalion. A letter from Major Munro at the time tells of the final act of that terrific engagement.

"George Northwood stuck it out at the trenches until the last and fought like a tiger, as did Owen, Bell and young Andrews, all of whom we believe are captured."

"The battle was over, but at what a cost! Major Munro's letter tells the story. 'Only the Colonel, McMeans, Morley, Scott, McLeod and myself were in the line-up with two hundred and thirty-one other ranks on Tuesday evening when we re-assembled at Wieltj.'

"Of that battle, of which the 8th is prouder than of any other of its battle honours. John Buchan, English war historian, wrote: 'Colonel Lipsett's battalion, which held the pivotal point on Gravenstafel Ridge, did not move an inch.'

"After the war David Lloyd George paid the Battalion this tribute: 'The 8th, by steadiness under strain, was the focal point of saving the channel ports and removing the danger to England of invasion.'

"In its description of the Second Battle of Ypres, the *Times* History carries the line that can also be recalled with pride: 'It is invidious to single out any battalion for special mention among troops, all of whom did so well. The 8th Battalion, the Winnipeg Rifles, won special distinction at the second battle of Ypres for being the one regiment able to hold its trenches firmly although heavily gassed.'"

Such was the stirring beginning of World War One. And when it was over, the 8th Battalion won 20 battle honors for the Regiment and 431 decorations, including three Victoria Crosses (CSM. F. W. Hall, Sgt. Alex



MAJOR GENERAL J. L. LIPSETT, C.M.G.

(Lt.-Col. Commanding, 8th Bn at 2nd battle of Ypres)  
Killed in action on 13 Sept., 1918 while in  
command of the 3rd Canadian Division.

Brereton and Sgt. F. G. Coppins), three Companions of St. Michael and St. George, 11 Distinguished Service Orders, 40 Military Crosses, seven bars to Military Crosses, 36 Distinguished Service Medals, 195 Military Medals, 15 bars to Military Medals, 70 Mentioned in Despatches, eight French Croix de Guerre, six Belgian Croix de Guerre and four Russian Orders of St. George. Two former members of the 90th — Capt. C. P. G. O'Kelly and Sgt. R. E. Small — won Victoria Crosses while serving with other battalions.

## Years of Mud and Blood

As the war progressed, the name Little Black Devils became a byword for courage and tenacity — tenacity which enabled them to be the only allied unit never to lose a trench.

On May 19, 1915, the beginning of the three-day Battle of Festubert severely tested the 8th, but they were determined never to forfeit

their claim of never having lost a trench. Givenchy in June, and the long stagnation along the "all-quiet" western front, the 300 casualties at Mount Sorrel in June, 1916, and the entry of the Regiment into the Battle of the Somme in September of that year, with the heavy attacks on the Zollern Redoubt, Hessian and Regina Trenches, tested the mettle of the Little Black Devils, and never were they found wanting. They helped, in this period of limited gains along the whole front, to pave the way for the successes of 1917.

Command of the Regiment had passed from Col. Lipsett (who, as Major General of the Third Canadian Division was killed in action eight weeks before the war ended) to Major H. H. Matthews in September, 1915. Wounded at Mount Sorrel, he relinquished command to Major K. C. Bedson. A few months later, Major J. M. Prower, DSO., succeeded him, holding command through the battles of the Somme, Vimy Ridge, Hill 70 and Passchendaele until April, 1918.

## Vimy and the Final Years

After the "black year" of 1916, the tide of battle swung in favor of the Allies. The Regiment in April, 1917, joined other Canadian units in the attack, in a blinding snowstorm and under withering artillery fire, on Vimy Ridge, on whose tragic slopes lay the bones of 150,000 French soldiers who died in an unsuccessful attempt to take it. To the 8th goes exclusive credit for capturing the key village of Arleux.

Then came Fresnoy, Lens, the capture of Hill 70 and the horror of Passchendaele in November, where in three days of mud and maddening misery this strategic enemy point was won.

And finally: 1918. Back, to the Somme rushed the Regiment to help in a counterattack against the German army, which had launched an assault against Amiens. In the early summer there was preparation for the great push — the Last Hundred Days that would see the end of the war.

## Amiens and Victory

Orders came for a secret concentration at Amiens, and at 4:20 a.m., August 8th, began the most decisive battle of the war. Here Lt.-Col. T. H. Raddall, D.S.O., who had succeeded Col. Prower, was killed in action as the Battalion cleared Hatchett Wood and took Warvillers. To his successor, Lt.-Col. A. L. Saunders, D.S.O., M.C., went the honor of leading the unit to final victory in a series of battles starting with Arras, (to turn the right flank of the Hindenburg Line), Drocourt-Queant, the crossing of the fire-swept Canal du Nord and the great Battle of Cambrai which pierced the Hindenburg Line and opened the way for the Pursuit to Mons. At Aubercourt, the last town taken by the 8th, the Battalion received news the war was over.

Back home after the march to the Rhine, the Regiment found itself almost immediately on call again — this time to aid the civil power in the great 1919 Winnipeg strike. And again the unit acquitted itself with tact and firmness in a difficult situation.

PASSCHENDAELE

MUD! MUD! MUD!







*The crossing  
of the  
Conal du Nard.*



*The capture  
of the sugar refinery,  
Courcelette.*



*YPRES.  
Canadians cheering  
British re-inforcements.*



*For a week in April  
the name of the Canadians  
filled the reports from  
the Western Front by their  
gallant work at Vimy Ridge.*



## Post-War

### Period No. 3

With this beginning, the Regiment entered its third "post-war" period, a period which three years after its start — 1922 — saw the seeds of a new war being planted as a young Italian blacksmith, Benito Mussolini, started organizing his brown-shirted Fascisti, and foreshadowed a similar development in Germany under Nazi leader Adolf Hitler.

Re-organization of the Regiment went to Lt.-Col. A. W. Morley, M.C., who assumed command in September, 1920. At the same time the Regiment lost its designation of "90th" and became The Winnipeg Rifles. In 1923, the Regiment became affiliated with the famous Rifle Brigade (Prince Consorts Own), and His Royal Highness The Duke of Connaught and Strathearn became its Colonel-in-Chief.

In 1924, Colonel C. C. Wansbrough, D.S.O., succeeded to command, carrying on the first-rate re-organizational work of Col. Morley.

In 1927, Major G. F. Dudley, M.C., M.M., V.D., with a war service dating to South Africa where he served as a bugler, took over command and had the honor of heading the Regiment during the great celebrations of 1933, when the unit became 50 years old. It was a stirring celebration, lasting a week, and attracting great crowds of Manitobans to its various events, for the Regiment was held in high esteem by the populace. Perhaps the highlight of the event — still recalled by soldier

and civilian alike — was the historical pageant in the old amphitheatre, behind Osborne stadium. In a display of military exactness and professional staging, the display dealt with seven major episodes of the Regiment's history: the organization, with the training and dress (black uniform, shako head-dress, Snider Enfield Rifle) of the times; the First Call to Arms, with troops wearing the Glengarry field service cap; the South African War, where drill Khaki, pith helmets and Lee-Metford Rifles were the proper dress; the 1911 coronation of King George V, with troops wearing ceremonial full-dress "greens" and carrying the Ross rifle; the climax of the war, with service khaki, distinguishing patches, battle order, steel helmet, respirator and the short Lee-Enfield rifle; the salute of the past to the present, and the salute of the present to the future.

## The Royal Prefix

A signal honor was conferred on The Winnipeg Rifles in 1935. His Majesty King George V, on his silver jubilee, recognized the distinguished service of the Regiment by giving it the prefix "Royal." The fame of the Regiment had been long-standing, and the 1933 anniversary celebrations had brought the Regiment once again to the notice of many. The occasion of the silver jubilee was considered the proper time to give the Regiment a Royal title.

At the same time, planning was undertaken to change the cap badge from a Rampant Devil to one more in line with the pattern of the Rifle Brigade. But the Devil still remained as the central theme.

In January, 1935, Lt.-Col. G. F. deC. O'Grady, son of a former Commanding Officer, assumed command. He was succeeded three years later by Lt.-Col. J. K. Bell, who was in command when Canada declared war on Germany. The Regiment was not called upon immediately to mobilize, but its strength was such that when the call came the unit was ready.



# **WORLD WAR TWO**



Opening chapter of the largest war the world has ever seen opened for the Rifles on June 1, 1940, when mobilization of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles in the 10th Canadian Infantry Brigade was announced. The next day, Lt.-Col. J. K. Bell, V.D., was called to District Headquarters and ordered to mobilize to war strength.

Such was the speed of mobilization that the unit, originally slated for the 4th Division, was placed in the 7th Brigade, 3rd Division, a move which eventually put them in the forefront of the Normandy assault.

In July, the Regiment left for Shilo for three months of training before going to the mudhole of Camp Debert, Nova Scotia. It was a typically rainy day when, on October 28, the unit arrived at that eastern camp to be met by the brigade commander, Brig. W. K. G. Calquhoun, M.C.

Winter of 1940-41 in that bleak camp was livened by much sports activity, both inter-unit, and with surrounding towns. The Regiment was a great favorite with the local people. Hockey, basketball and curling teams were active in the district; the band under Bandmaster F. R. Stanford was invited to town after town, and the Regimental padre, H/Capt. Harry Parker, found himself in the pulpit of many a local church.

Training was sharpened up; bren guns replaced the old Lewis; the .55 Boys anti-tank rifle was the latest weapon for the infantry companies, and the two-pounder formed the backbone of the unit's anti-tank system. The first 3" Mortars arrived March 24, 1941. New "Tommy" guns, product of Capone's Chicago days, were introduced, without ammunition.

By Easter, the camp was fast becoming liveable, with strong inter-company rivalry to see who could produce the best parade areas. And beyond the parade squares was the muddy ground where river crossings, patrolling, attack and defence tactics were practiced.

In May, Major W. J. Bingham, M.C., V.D., who had been acting commander in the place of the ailing Col. Bell, was named Commanding Officer.



# Training in Cda



Top left: Battalion Headquarters, Debert, N.S., 1941. Whitewashed racks courtesy of the defaulters.

Centre left: Lt.-Col. J. W. Bingham, M.C., V.D. Officer Commanding 1st Battalion of time of move overseas.

Bottom left: Number 2 Section at last beginning to look like L.B.D.'s.

Left: Hurry Up and Wait. Part of the unit preparing to leave Debert for embarkation.

Below: On the way at last. Aboard the S.S. Orbita bound for England. July 1941.



*...and then overseas*





## England : The Long Wait

Three months later — August 28th, Col. Bingham led the unit aboard the S. S. Orbita, a 15,500-ton ship carrying raw sugar and copper in its hold. The next day they were off on the start of a great mission. In convoy guarded by corvettes, destroyers and long-range escort bombers, the ship took the Little Black Devils past the chilly coast of Greenland, across to the Hebrides, down the west coast of Scotland past the Isle of Man and into the great port of Liverpool. It was an awesome sight for the Regiment: barrage balloons, sunken ships in the Mersey River, barbed wire, gun positions and a badly-damaged port.

On September 13, 1941, the Regiment disembarked, headed for Aldershot and the ancient Oudenarde barracks and, after a September 18th inspection by the King and Queen, moved to Haig Lines at Crookham Crossroads.

The stay was short, for December 1 the unit moved to Wykehurst Park, — its first operational role, defending the nodal point of Cowfold and got its first introduction to corrugated Nissen huts, which were to serve as standard accommodation for most of the stay in England. Here, the beloved padre H/Capt. E. W. Horton conducted his first service at nearby Bolney Hall.

First Christmas in England was a real one: turkey, plum pudding and all the trimmings. Guests were evacuee children from London.

Early in January of the new year — 1942 — saw Col. Bingham, overage for the type of role the unit would play — succeeded by Lt.-Col. T. G. Gibson, who led the unit in the anti-

invasion scheme of "Beaver 2" in February. The "Plan to Defeat Invasion" was issued to the unit, and in April it moved into an anti-raid role at Shoreham-by-Sea. Here it observed the 57th anniversary, April 23, of the Battle of Fish Creek before returning to Wykehurst to take part in a motorized anti-invasion scheme, "Beaver IV".

Then followed one of the major tests, outside of actual battle — Exercise Tiger, an 11-day endurance scheme in which the Regiment moved out of battle positions at Firle Park, east of Lewes, and fought its way 130 miles to Wadhurst.

An item in the war diary of June 17, 1942, gives a forecast of things to come. It said: "The first group under Lt. G. I. James left for an Assault Landing Course at Seaford."

On June 23, the battalion's second-in-command, Major J. A. Wilson, and a 50-man detachment represented the Regiment at the funeral of the Colonel-in-Chief, H.R.H. The Duke of Connaught and Strathearn, in St. George Chapel at Windsor Castle.

## Training for Victory

By mid-1942, the great German offensive was being stemmed in Russia and Egypt, and from then on training in England centred more and more on the attack and became more realistic. Battle drill courses devoted themselves entirely to attack, and live ammunition was used wherever possible in tactical training.

July 2 saw Lt.-Col. W. J. Moogek assume command of the unit, a posting he held for five months until he was succeeded by the man who would take the new generation of Little Black Devils in their first action — Lt.-Col. John M. Meldram.

On August 8th, the unit moved again to Angmering-on-Sea and a week later to West Chiltington Common.

Here, the Battalion celebrated the 59th anniversary of the Regiment, while the 2nd Battalion observed the occasion in Winnipeg and the 3rd Battalion at Debert. The West Chiltington ceremony was very fitting in that

one of the few remaining members of the original 90th, Mr. W. L. Buchanan of Southport, took the salute. Mr. Buchanan, as a drummer boy at Fish Creek, distinguished himself while carrying ammunition to the men in the front line and was mentioned in despatches.

*"Willie Buchanan" (W. A. Buchanon, now residing in Southsea, England) drummer boy of the 90th Regiment, Winnipeg Rifles, mentioned in despatches of Major-General Sir Frederick D. Middleton, KCMG, CB, as having at the battle of Fish Creek, North West Territories, Canada, 24th April, 1885, "made himself particularly useful in carrying ammunition to the right front when the fire was very hot; this he did with peculiar nonchalance, walking about calmly crying:*

*"Now boys wha's for cartridges?"*

*Below: Mr. Buchanan takes the salute of the 59th Anniversary at the Regiment of West Chillington, 1942.*



## The Great Decision

Early in 1943, while the unit was moving to Strood Park near Horsham, large and secret plans for the next phase of the war were being laid out at Casablanca. Troops were concentrating in England, and as early as March of that year the Rifles knew they were to be one of the initial assault units. During the summer new equipment poured in; the Lee Enfield Mark V rifle replaced the Mark IV and in July the six-pounder anti-tank gun replaced the two-pounders.

The final training was getting underway. In August, the Battalion left for Combined Operations Training off the rugged Scottish coast near Inverary. The troops were told they would be assaulting across the channel to France, and the divisional order of battle was set, naming the 7th Brigade as right flank assault. For three weeks the problems of waterproofing vehicles, boat drills, drills for beach deployment, for assaulting casements and pillboxes, for mounting seawalls and their barbed-wire entanglements, were carried out.

September 1 saw the Rifles move south to Bournemouth, then to Gosport, across the bay from Portsmouth, on the 28th. The series of short moves continued: Barton Stacey near Winchester; back to Gosport for a brief spell in an old fortress built to repel an earlier invasion (Napoleonic); and then, on December 7th, to Freshwater Bay on the Isle of Wight, just across from the Baie de la Seine, where six months later the Battalion would find its destiny.

## Pirate: The Last "Dry Run"

But meanwhile, the last major assault practice was undertaken — exercise Pirate, at Studland Bay on the Dorset coast in October, 1943. Here was the full-scale practice with the air force and the navy's "J" Force, which was to carry the Battalion to France.

Here the great "combined fire plan" — a foretaste of the tremendous D-Day bombardment — was put into effect. While bombing



*Church Parade, Winchester, April, 1944.*

was called off because of weather, machine-gunning and cannon fire by the air force was brought to bear on beach defences, new-type rocket fire from vessels, and actual field artillery firing from tank landing craft was used to "shoot in" the assault troops as they slipped from assault landing craft onto the beaches, scaled sea-walls with steel ladders, threw matting over entanglements, blew up wire with long bangalore torpedos and damaged pillboxes with pole charges.

Continued tactics and cliff-scaling was carried on during the last winter in England at beautiful Freshwater Bay.

## Girding the Loins

Then: April 4th, 1944 — the move to a concentration area (C7) at Hiltington between Winchester and Southampton. The battalion was in a security zone, kept more so by a limitation of all non-security traffic throughout the whole of south England. An inspection by the King on April 25th, and one by the new allied Commander-in-Chief General Dwight Eisenhower on May 13th, provided about the only outside contact, as final waterproofing of vehicles and checking of equipment got underway.

There was one ceremony which the Battalion could not overlook. The unit diary for April 23, said:

"Today, on the anniversary of the Battle of Fish Creek, the Battalion attended a special service in historic old Winchester Cathedral.

"Under this same nave, King Richard, 'Coeur-de-Lion', knelt for benediction before embarking on his Crusade. Today, the Dean pronounced his benediction over us and prayed for our safe return just as another Holy man had prayed for the safe return of Richard.

"Simultaneous with the Protestant service, the Roman Catholic personnel were attending Mass at St. Peter's Church. The two parades joined to march past the Guildhall, where Brigadier H. W. Foster took the salute."

## The Great Plan

As final preparations were being made by the unit for what was termed "The Great Adventure," officers were studying the plan of action for the first permanent return to France since the tragic Battle of Dunkirk four years earlier.

The plan was this: the fleet would begin bombardment of the Normandy beaches about six a.m. on D-Day; destroyers would hit beach targets, artillery regiments on landing craft would lay down barrages while rocket craft would blast the beach strip with their wicked high explosives. Numerous types of gunboats

and support craft were to sweep the sand and dunes; fighter-bombers and rocket-firing typhoons were assigned to tasks, while masses of heavy and medium bombers were to attack a series of points from Le Havre to Cherbourg, the two flanking points on the Baie de la Seine.

For the assaulting infantry, tanks and engineers, there were series of formidable obstacles, beginning with 12-foot-high iron gates — called "element C" — set in the sea four hundred yards out from high-water. Between here and shore were hundreds of hedge-hogs — four-foot-high triangles of steel or wood, each tipped with a primed German mine or old French shell, that could blast holes with ease in the bottom of assault craft.

And on the shore itself, ahead of the sand dunes, were masses of barbed wire. In the dunes were coastal fortifications, lines of concrete and steel pillboxes, big-gun casements, elaborate trench systems, underground chambers, hidden machine gun posts and gun batteries sunk in the earth. Houses near the beach were fortified; guns on slopes beyond the beaches were sighted in on every approach to the beach and dunes, and stretching inland were numerous other positions and defence lines, hinged on fortified towns, villages and cities. Elaborate minefields had been laid — as well as dummy ones — and exits from the beaches were covered by artillery, mortar and machine-gun fire.

For the Royal Winnipeg Rifles, with a company of Canadian Scottish under command, the landing was to take place on a highly defended strip of beach and dune extending from Courseulles — a small fishing village at the mouth of the Seulles River — for half a mile to the west. After the break-out from the beaches, the main objective was to cut the road and rail line from Caen to Bayeux 11 miles inland, and consolidate on the high ground near Putot-en-Bessin.

Such was the plan for a new generation of Little Black Devils: their first action would fling them into a holocaust that demanded success or face complete annihilation.

The Battalion was ready.

*Battle Training, Southampton, 1943.*



## The Armada Sails

On June 2, 1944, the unit embarked at the docks and "Hards" of Southampton. "A" and "C" Companies were aboard the L.S.I. (Landing Ship Infantry) "Llangeby Castle," with "B" Company on the "Baird Isle" and "D" aboard the "Canterbury." Vehicles, guns and mortars were loaded on numerous smaller craft. After a 24-hour postponement, the craft moved out of the Solent and through the boom-gates on the evening of June 5th, bound for the never-to-be-forgotten beaches of Normandy.

It was time to tell all ranks the details of the plan. Previously, "bogus" maps, with code

names only, had been used. The briefing with maps and air photos was so complete that each soldier knew precisely what the beach looked like, the location of the defense system, the beach exits, and what lay inland. There was an air of quiet expectancy as weapons were given a final check, sea-sick tablets and vomit bags for use in the smaller assault craft were made ready, and last letters written home.

At 0520 hrs, 6 June 1944, the troops formed into boat loads and clambered down into the small, bobbing, 30-man assault craft. Through a boiling sea, the 10-mile run-in began.

*Rifles embark for France.  
June, 1944.*





# Inferno

## on the beaches



# North-West Europe

WORLD WAR TWO



London

Southampton  
Gosport  
Portsmouth

Aldershot  
Angmering  
West Chiltington  
Worthing  
Horsham

Brighton  
Eastborne

Calais  
Boulogne

Ostend  
Breskens

Ghent

Antwerp

Brussels

France

Le Havre

Dieppe

Amiens

Rouen

Elbeuf

Falaise

Trun

Courseulles  
Putot-en-Bessin  
Caen  
Carpiquet

Holland

Amsterdam  
The Hague

Maarssen

Rotterdam

Utrecht

Ede

Zwolle

Deventer

Arnhem

Nijmegen

Beek

s'Hertogenbosch

Grave

Eindhoven

Clavel

Gobb

Emmerich

Calcar

Appingedam

Gronigen

Emden

Esens

Aurich

Leer

## Inferno on the Beaches

For the Rifles, the battle started before the assault craft touched shore. It was one of the few units to come under really heavy fire before landing, as the vaunted fire support failed to strike their targets and not a single enemy or emplacement was hit. The leading companies — "D" and a pioneer section under Major L. R. Fulton, "B" and No. 15 platoon of "C" company under Captain P. E. Gower, and the Canadian Scottish company — had to wade ashore and storm their positions cold — and did so, states the war diary, "without hesitation."

War correspondent Ross Munro explained it this way: "Bloody fighting raged all along the beaches. On the right the Winnipeg had to battle their way past five major concrete easements and 15 machine-gun positions set in the dunes, commanding a long sweep of beach. From dune to dune, along the German trench systems and through the tunnels, these Manitoba troops fought every yard of the way. They broke into the big easements, ferreted out the gun crews with machine-guns, grenades, bayonets and knives. The Canadians ran into cross-fire. They were shelled and mortared even in the German positions, but kept slugging away at the enemy. The 1st Hussars' tanks churned through the dunes in close support and after a struggle which was . . . bitter and savage . . . the Winnipeg broke through into the open country behind the beach. The company of Canadian Scottish shared this heavy-fighting with the Winnipeg."

By 0900 hours — an hour and eleven minutes after touching down, fast-striking "D" Company had gapped the minefield at La Valette and cleared Graye-sur-Mer, with two forward elements through towards Banville. "B" Company and 15 platoon had forced a crossing of the Senles River and cleared out four gun positions on an island.

Meanwhile, "A" and "C" companies and part of Battalion headquarters landed on the fire-swept beaches and dunes; fire being so bad that part of Bn. H.Q. was pinned for two hours,



*Moving up  
through fields near Caen.  
July, 44.*

with the wireless set as the enemy point-of-aim. "A" Company under Major F. E. Hodge pushed inland towards Croix-sur-Mer, starting at 0805 hours, and were pinned by fire from six to eight enemy machine-gun positions just short of assaulting distance. Simultaneously, "C" Company under Major J. M. D. Jones advanced toward Benville and cleared enemy opposition until pinned down from commanding ground south of the town.

By early afternoon, "C" and "D" Companies had moved south from Banville for Tierceville and Creully. The remnants of "B" Company had reported with only the company commander and 26 other ranks having survived the assault on three easements and twelve machine-gun emplacements, while "A" Company, with tank support, was routing strongly-entrenched enemy out of the Croix - sur - Mer sector. Throughout all this advance, the entire unit was under a merciless rain of shell and mortar of astonishing accuracy.

By evening, the unit consolidated around a quarry near Creully, having completed Phase Two of Operation Overlord, and settled down

for a night of fighting off enemy patrols and re-organizing the greatly depleted Battalion.

The final entry for the day in the war diary echoed the words of all the Regiment. It said, simply, "It is thought that the Little Black Devils, by this day's success, has managed to maintain the tradition set by former members."

## Battle of the Beach-Head

The next day the Battalion fought its way forward through the "cushion" between the beach defences and the strong enemy mobile reserve, reaching the high ground at Putot in a race with the Regina Rifles for the honor of being the first unit of all British, Canadian and American forces to reach their main objective. Col. Stacey, official Canadian Army historian, said: "It was a close finish — so close that the historian, on the basis of the units' own records,

finds it impossible to say with a certainty which actually won."

In a limited history of this nature, it is possible only to mention a few of the desperate battles that waged across France, the channel ports, the low countries and into Germany—fights that gave the Regiment 20 new battle honors, so that after World War Two the Little Black Devils, with a total of 44 honors on its roll, became the proud possessor of more battle honors than any other Canadian regiment.

At Putot on June 8th, the first inland battle was locked. The 21st Panzer Division and the fanatical Hitlerjugend of the 12th SS Division viciously counterattacked the Rifles' salient with tanks and infantry using a high complement of automatic weapons. The Rifles, without tank support, were cut off, surrounded, and three companies were decimated, with only



"D" Company remaining, until a tank-supported counterattack by the Canadian Scottish restored the situation. Nineteen of the Little Black Devils captured in that bitterly-contested battle, including Major Fred Hodge, were murdered by General Kurt Meyer's 12th SS troops a few days later. The revenge was quick and relentless: within two months the entire 12th SS Division — 12,000 strong — was completely annihilated with the exception of 100 men, who had been sent back earlier to serve as a nucleus for the reforming of a new SS Division.



## Carpiquet to the Seine

From June until August the Battle of Normandy raged. Constant fighting was the vogue as strong pressure on the vital Caen nodal point held a large part of the German Seventh Army and its reserves committed there, leaving the Americans free to swing south and east in a giant right hook. The heart-breaking job of assaulting strongly-entrenched enemy, backed by accurate, fearful "88s" and fairly strong air activity, kept the Regiment in constant action for 56 days before the first brief rest in August was accorded them.

One of the fiercest battles in this period was the attack on Carpiquet airfield. "A" Company (Maj. J. T. Carvell) and "D" Company (Maj. L. R. Fulton) were under constant mortar and shell fire from the time they crossed the start-line at 0520 hours on that July 4th morning. With close support from "B" Company (Maj. Samuel Hale) and "C" Company (Maj. B. D. Strachan), the two leading companies reached the line of concrete hangars, pill-boxes and dug-in tanks before withering fire forced the companies to reform and again move into a renewed attack, only to have heavy artillery and mortar fire from a semi-circle of high ground make the position untenable for the depleted companies.

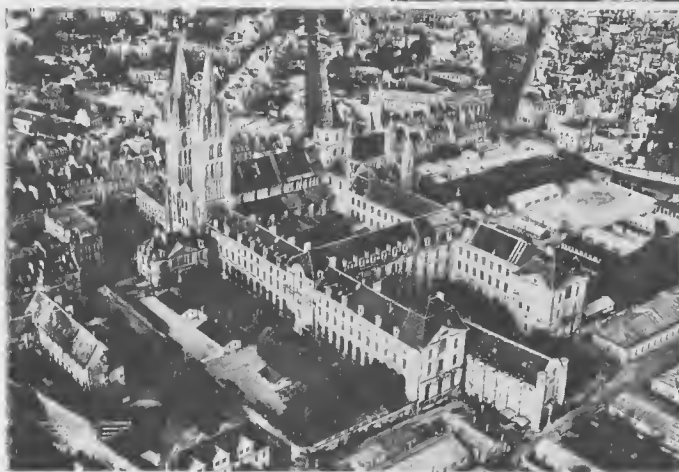
The pressure of battle continued: Carpiquet, Caen, the crossing of the Orne River, on to Vaucelles and the factory area near the bitterly-fought-for town of Tilly la Campagne, with the enemy pushed back to the Falaise defence line. Then, that few days' welcomed rest in August — a rest that consisted of training and company night attacks.

The final Battle of Normandy followed, and with it the destruction of the German Seventh Army in the Falaise pocket. The Little Black Devils, fighting their way forward through wheatfields, sunken roads and towns, took part in the destruction of the enemy in the Trun gap, and without a delay swung eastward across the Seine at Elbouf and north to the Channel ports at Cap Gris Nez.



# Caen ...the hinge

*Caen reduced to a fantastic pile of rubble by navy shelling and air force bombing. Before — and after.*





## Calais: Final Battle for France

Elimination of the outer defences of Calais actually began 25 Sept. 1944, although a number of V-1 launching sites had been overrun in the preceding few days, relieving England of the terror of this new weapon.

Following the capture of Les Alleux, La Basse Normandie and Coquelles — a fringe of defence points on a high feature overlooking

Calais — the final obstacle, on the edge of a flooded canal at the city's outskirts, was an old, highly-fortified fort, with a deep, wide, moat, 33-foot-high walls, and containing concrete and steel bunkers in its courtyard. Attacks by rifle companies, artillery concentrations and heavy bombing by Lancasters dropping block busters failed to dislodge the well-armed, protected enemy.

Finally, in the face of heavy fire, "A" and "D" Companies pushed near enough to enable carrier sergeant Joe Roshick to slip across the old drawbridge to the entrance of Fort Neiulay with a section of flamethrowers and force the surrender of the garrison. Three days later, Calais fell. From this great port thousands of prisoners moved into cages; the city's coastal guns were silenced, and the "rocket coast" of the Pas de Calais was cleared.

*Ten minute halt.*





Familiar "Toc-Sign 55"  
Carrier moving up hill south  
of Thoon, France, 8 Aug., 44.



## Leopold: Battle of the Polders

Exactly one week later in another country—Belgium—the fast-moving Battalion assaulted across the Leopold Canal to help clear the Scheldt Estuary, and thus enable the great port of Antwerp to be used to build up supplies for the final major thrust into Germany. This land of flooded polders, where 15-foot-high dykes were used as roadways, was the scene of one of the war's most bitterly-fought operations.

Plunging into an inferno of fire from machine-guns, mortar and heavy coastal artillery, the Rifles bridged a gap between the Regina Rifles and Canadian Scottish. For five days the battle raged along a perilously-narrow bridgehead as the German 6th division, back from the Russian front, hurled counter-attack after counter-attack.



*The M.O., R. M. Caldwell, and the Padre, E. W. Horton. Calais.*

"By all the rules of war," wrote Ross Munro, "the bridgehead should have been lost; the battalions should have been wiped out or forced to withdraw . . . It was only by sheer guts that the western units hung onto their positions . . . The fighting was just as savage as the same battalions had seen at Bretteville and Putot-en-Bessin . . ."

At the height of the battle, Col. Meldram, who had led the battalion in all its operations up to that time, was evacuated to hospital. Major L. R. Fulton, DSO, assumed command.

After the fifth day of battle, the Battalion was able to push out of the small bridgehead,



*Riflemen move forward on an M-10 to bottle area at Gauy, east of the Seine, 30 Aug., 44.*

*Anti-tank gunners from the Regiment move beyond the Seine, 30 Aug., 44.*





*Sometimes the bridges would  
be a bit makeshift.*

that had extended only a couple of hundred yards. By persistent fighting, they captured the village of Graff Jan.

At this point the Battalion, with the rest of 7th Brigade, turned over their positions to a British division and moved around the right flank of the Scheldt pocket to hit the enemy from the east. From Oct. 22 until Nov. 1, the fighting continued under constant harrasing fire from coastal guns across the Estuary on Waleheren Island. The Scheldt finally was cleared, and the Port of Antwerp was opened for business.

A brief, welcomed rest at Ghent, where the Rifles were guests of a jubilant city, the Battalion was off again, to take over positions from the U.S. 82nd Airborne Division near Nijmegen, Holland. This was a winter holding role, in preparation for the clearing of the enemy from the west bank of the Rhine.

## Seigfried Line to the Rhine

The battle started in mid-February, 1945, with the Royal Winnipeg Rifles using Buffaloes (amphibious tracked craft) to carry them over flooded land to hit the northern end of the Seigfried Line, and to penetrate the first major defences within Germany herself. Through Cleve the Battalion moved forward to meet, and defeat, Germany's elite paratroopers at Luisendorf. The Rifles had moved into this engagement in armoured personnel carriers (Kangaroos), which took them over fire-swept ground right up to the enemy positions. It was a heavily-fought engagement.

The battle for the west bank of the Rhine continued, with the Rifles next conducting a beautifully-executed attack on Moyland Woods. At one point, Lt. Ran Wybourne took his flame-throwing carriers into heavy woods to support a "C" Company assault (Maj. C. S. Platts) on a wooded hill feature defended by paratroopers. Unit casualties were heavy, but these woods, which had withstood attacks from other units, fell under the Rifles' assault.



*The results of German flooding of the area around Nijmegen — February 45.*


*Near Nijmegen — when the roads looked like this the driving was inclined to be a bit difficult.*



*RWR's advance down ditch  
along the German-Holland  
border. 24 Apr., 45.*







RWR bren-gunners check for  
snipers as prisoners move  
back from Groningen,  
Holland. 13 Apr., 45.

The Battalion advanced through Udem, past the edge of the Hochwald Forest, to Sonsbeek and finally to Xanten on the west bank of the Rhine. Through this whole operation, some of the heaviest fire of the war was endured by the unit, as enemy rockets reinforced the fire of 88's, 75's, mortars and machine-guns. Each town was fortified, with its own anti-tank ditch, and further helped by the wet, boggy ground of early spring.

## Over the Rhine to Victory

A short rest in March back in the Reichwald Forest, through which ran the Siegfried Line, and the Rifles were ready for the final move across the Rhine. On March 27th the attack



*Royal Winnipeg Rifles move through Cleve, Germany to tackle paratroopers at Luisendorf.  
13 Feb., 45.*



got underway, and after fighting vigorously for Emmerich the unit pursued the fleeing enemy north along the Holland-German border, meeting very bitter rearguard resistance at Zutphen, Deventer and Zwolle. Through northwest Holland the enemy was pursued, and forced back to a line on the Ems estuary. Here, on the approaches to Appingdem, on April 22, the Regiment faced its last strongly-opposed action.

While preparing for a May 5th cross-canal assault on the German town of Aurich in the peninsula between Emden and Wilhelmshaven, the order was given to cease hostilities.

Two days later — at 2:41 A.M. 7 May, 1945 — the documents of surrender for all German forces everywhere were signed.

The war in Europe was over!

As duties of the occupational force were turned over to a newly-established Fourth Battalion of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles, under Lt.-Col. R. P. Clark, the First Battalion moved back into Holland, preparing for the trip back to Canada. Just as the new year of 1946 dawned, Col. Fulton brought the unit back to Winnipeg, to a warm civic reception in the Winnipeg Auditorium.

In a moving ceremony, the final battalion parade was held in the auditorium, and the unit was formally dismissed for the last time.



## The Regiment Carries On

While the First Battalion was in Europe, two other Battalions of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles were operating with traditional esprit-de-corps in Canada. The Second (Reserve)



*First anniversary of D-Day. Lt.-Col. L. R. Fulton, DSO, leads unit in March Past in Utrecht, 6 June, 45.*

Battalion was established in late June of 1940, shortly after the First Battalion had mobilized. It was commanded throughout most of the war years by Lt.-Col. J. E. Tulloch, M.C. (1940-1944) followed by Lt. - Col. W. W. Thompson, D.S.O., M.C. Recruits from the efficiently-trained Battalion moved into active service with a strong Rifle tradition behind them. In addition to normal military training, the Battalion emphasized winter exercises, and its ski patrols, trained by Lt. Bertram Bristow, were well-known in army circles.

On June 1, 1942 — some two years after the First Battalion mobilized — the Third Battalion was formed under command of Lt.-Col. Campbell Millar, E.D., as part of the 7th Division. Three months later it moved to operational duty in eastern Canada, with headquarters at Debert, N.S. After intensive

training in battalion, brigade and divisional exercises throughout Cape Breton Island and the Nova Scotian mainland, it was assigned the job of guarding the Canso Straits and artillery installations at Shelbourne.

In 1943, when the need for European reinforcement forced the disbandment of the 7th Division, Col. Millar's entire unit volunteered for overseas duty. Many wound up with the First Battalion, joining a number of their Third Battalion friends who had gone to Europe earlier.



## Post-War Period No. 4

Since World War Two the Regiment has experienced a series of new roles. And it was able to carry them out because of the excellent transition from war to peace which ensured a continually smooth-functioning unit. Those back from overseas fitted into the pattern established by the Reserve Battalion, and carried on under Col. Thompson until he was succeeded by a Second War Officer, Lt.-Col. G. I. James, in 1947.

This period, internationally, was touchy, for the western nations had demobilized greatly while Russia had not.

At home, the unit undertook the first of its new roles: assistance during the great 1950 flood, when its members worked on the dykes and guarded installations. And the following year, because of the good state of training, the Regiment was called upon to form two Active Service companies — "E" and "F" — for service with the 27th Brigade in Germany as part of the NATO force.

In 1952, Lt.-Col. David Campbell, holder of the Bronze Lion of the Order of Orange Nassau, assumed command. He had to relinquish it the following year when his firm sent him to Saskatoon. The present Commanding Officer, Lt.-Col. Charles S. Platts, also a holder of the Netherlands' Nassau Order, succeeded him.



LT.-COL. D. CAMPBELL  
*Bronze Lion (Netherlands)*  
Commanding Officer 1952-53.

An event of major importance took place in 1953 when the Winnipeg Light Infantry, whose founding dates back to the Northwest Rebellion, was amalgamated with the Royal Winnipeg Rifles. The similarity of early history and training did much to ease the sharp blow of the loss of an historic military name. The officers and men of the W.L.I. who exchanged the badge of the Beaver for that of the Rampant Devil were eager to get on with the job of military training, and their presence has enhanced the Regiment.

The post-war work of the Rifles in flood-fighting and supplying a peacetime defensive force in Germany saw another revision with the introduction of civil defence training. This



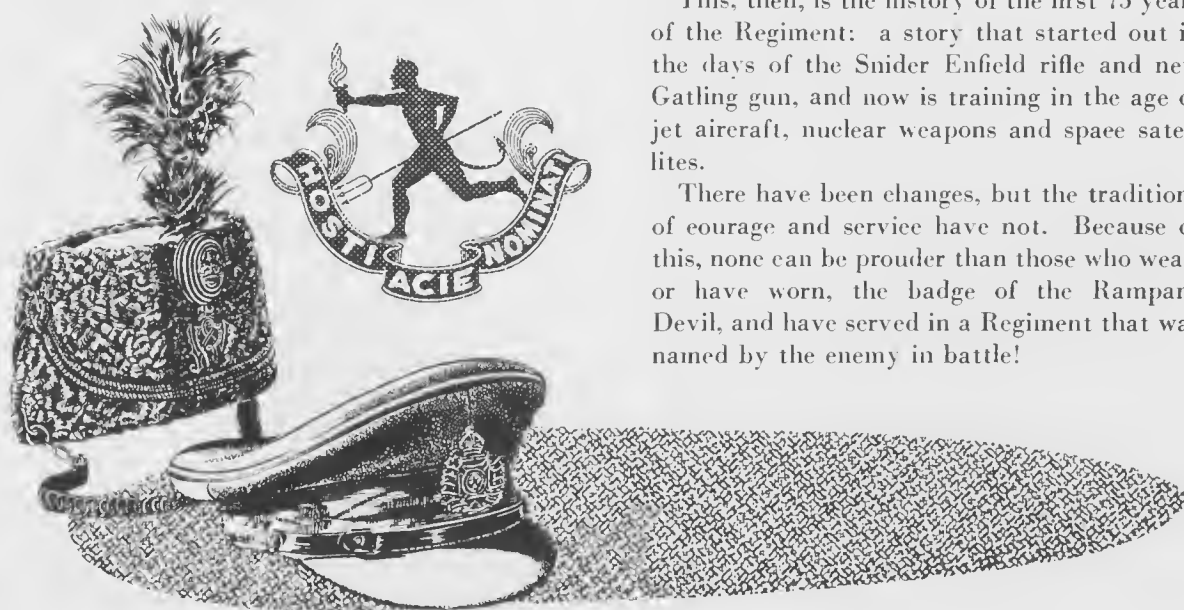


*Lt.-Col. G. H. Aikins, DSO, KC, who was Honorary Colonel from 1931 until his death in 1953, is shown here with Lt.-Cols. D. Campbell and C. S. Plotts on the occasion of the take over ceremony.*

was in recognition of the additional role the military might have to play in the light of the latest, fearsome weapons.

This, then, is the history of the first 75 years of the Regiment: a story that started out in the days of the Snider Enfield rifle and new Gatling gun, and now is training in the age of jet aircraft, nuclear weapons and space satellites.

There have been changes, but the traditions of courage and service have not. Because of this, none can be prouder than those who wear, or have worn, the badge of the Rampant Devil, and have served in a Regiment that was named by the enemy in battle!





# THE *Shooting* RIFLES

True to their name, the "Rifles" have stressed — and with considerable success — the accurate shooting of the soldier's basic weapon.

Since its inception, the Regiment has had an excellent rifle-shooting record. Many of its first officers and N.C.O.'s were prize-winning marksmen of note when they joined the new Regiment, including the Commanding Officer. This tradition is no more apparent than at the present time. It is interesting to note that the 1958 Bisley team included five present or former members of the unit, out of a total of 18 for all of Canada. As well, an "unattached" shooter, Lt. J. W. Battershill, who was with the Regiment's Bisley team in 1912, and who has been in rifle competitions for 53 consecutive years, accompanied the 1958 contingent.

The Bisley winners form a proud record: 1887, Pte. A. Gillies won the Prince of Wales prize; 1909, Sgt. A. M. Blackburn, an outstanding shot, won the same trophy, as well as the Rapid Fire Aggregate, Birmingham Cup, Wingrave Cup and Martin Challenge Cup, a

record unequalled in the Commonwealth; 1913, S/Sgt. C. A. Hawley took the Association Cup; 1932, Lt. G. A. Molecey won the Duke of Cambridge trophy. Major J. W. Houlden, a present member of unit, won the Conan Doyle trophy in 1952 while a member of the W.L.I.

While space doesn't permit the naming of all Regimental Bisley shots, the name of Lt. Nelson Colville shouldn't be omitted. He has been named to six Bisley teams, and was a team member when the McKinnon and Kolapore trophies were won in 1938 and 1951, and the McKinnon alone in 1952. Lt. Colville was named "Mr. Shooter" of 1957 after winning the Governor-General's Prize at Ottawa.

Successes by the Regiment at Ottawa and at Manitoba Provincial Rifle Association matches alone would fill a small volume. Trophy after trophy, cup after cup, have found their way back to the Rifles' trophy room. In 1957 alone, when the 1958 Bisley team was picked, the Rifles took six firsts, five seconds and four thirds in team competition at the MPRA matches, together with five individual firsts. At Ottawa, the Rifle association teams took four firsts, two seconds and two thirds, with four individuals getting firsts and three others losing out in shoot-offs for firsts.

Since the last brief history of the Regiment was written in 1933, some 20 trophies have been won at Ottawa by the Rifles. These include the much-sought-after British Challenge Shield, plus the Gzowski Match and Dundonald Match in 1934, the British Challenge Shield, Gzowski Match, Coates Cup, Gascogne Cup and Gordon Highlanders Trophy in 1935, the Lansdowne in 1937, City of Ottawa Cup and Lewis Gun Match in 1938, Borden Team Match in 1939, Victoria Rifles of Canada Challenge Trophy in 1953, Coates Match in 1955, Coates Match and Barlow Match in 1956, and the MacDonald Challenge Shield, City of Ottawa Trophy, Imperial Tobacco Cup and Gillespie Challenge Trophy in 1957.

These are the high goals set for the younger members of the unit, who, under careful coaching and local competitions, are preparing to carry on the great shooting tradition.

## The Shooting Rifles

"MR. SHOOTER,"  
Lieut. Nelson Colville  
is choired  
after winning  
"THE GOVERNOR'S"  
Ottawa, 1957.

Winnipeg Rifles "Kids" Team, all under 21,  
pose with trophies  
won of MPRA shoot in 1932.  
All later went to Bisley.  
Left to Right:  
Rfn (now Lt.-Col.) D. C. BRERETON  
Cpl. (now Capt.) G. J. GAMBLE  
Rfn (now Major) A. J. F. ROBERTS  
Rfn (now Capt.) M. M. MORGAN



# THE NCOs and WOs of THE ROYAL WINNIPEG RIFLES - 1958



Back Row: WO 2 G. R. White CD, S/Sgt. J. McCankey CD, CQMS N. B. Harsfall CD, Sgt. M. Abrams CD, Sgt. J. E. Besfack, WO 2  
 G. R. Poterson CD, WO 2 R. McDonald CD.  
 2nd Row: S/Sgt. D. O. Graham CD, Sgt. J. E. Waltan CD, Sgt. R. N. Wardle, Sgt. C. H. E. Smith, S/Sgt. E. J. Wells CD, Sgt. F.  
 McCankey CD, Sgt. E. Maddigan CWAC, Sgt. M. Johnson CWAC, S/Sgt. A. F. H. Parker CD, S/Sgt. E. T. Waltan, Sgt. E. C. A.  
 Pickering, S/Sgt. W. Hall CD, S/Sgt. S. Maza CD, Sgt. R. Cade, S/Sgt. A. E. Halmes CD.  
 Baffam Row: WO 2 J. Kumka, WO 2 D. McFeiridge CD, WO 2 S. Ehinger CD, WO 2 W. E. Werry CD, WO 1 (RSM) D. S. Fullerton  
 CD, Lt-Col. C. S. Platts MID, CD, Order of the Branzie Lion (Netherlands), WO 1 J. Paisley CD, WO 2 W. H. Benoba CD,  
 WO 2 H. J. Tawnsend CD, WO 2 K. H. Redshaw, WO 2 J. C. Caogan CD.



LT.-COL. C. S. PLATTS, CD,  
Order of the Bronze Lion (Netherlands)  
Commanding Officer



MAJOR  
A. G. BIEBER, CD  
2nd in Command



LT.-COL.  
J. R. TAYLOR, CD  
M.O.



MAJOR  
N. R. DONOGH, CD



MAJOR  
J. GREGOR, CD



CAPT. J. W. BATTER, CD



CAPT.  
G. W. BATTERSHILL, CD



CAPT. R. R. CLAYDON



CAPT.  
N. F. N. DIGBY, ED, CD

# OFFICERS OF THE REGIMENT 1958



LIEUT.  
A. C. LAURINE, CD  
Director of Music



LIEUT. J. E. BAIGRIE



LIEUT. G. T. BRAZZELL



LIEUT. C. HOLKE, CD



2 LIEUT. D. J. BARSKY



2 LIEUT. J. BLACK



2 LIEUT. J. G. McKILLOP



2 LIEUT. A. S. MURRAY





MAJOR  
J. W. HOULDEN, CD



MAJOR  
H. G. JOHNSTONE  
ED, CD



MAJOR  
G. L. MOLGAT



MAJOR  
L. WAINWRIGHT, CD



CAPT. T. D. CARSON  
Adjutant



CAPT.  
G. J. GAMBLE, ED



CAPT. G. S. PARK, CD



CAPT. D. B. SCOTT, CD



LIEUT. G. N. WALKER  
Assist. Adjutant



LIEUT.  
J. H. MAITLAND, CD  
Paymaster



LIEUT. G. D. KNIGHT



LIEUT. H. E. LOISELLE



LIEUT.  
L. A. RUSHWORTH, CD



LIEUT. W. R. SPENCE



LIEUT. R. M. THOMPSON



O/C N. BOBBIE



O/C G. W. F. CARSTED



O/C  
T. R. L. CHAPLIN  
(CWAC)



O/C W. ENGBRECHT



O/C T. E. SPENCE



*"D" DAY OFFICERS 1 BN., ENGLAND, JUNE, 1944*

*Top Row, Left to Right — LT. L. McQUEEN, CAPT. W. H. LUND, LT. G. SAVAGE, LT. J. KARASAVICH, R.S.M. J. AUSTIN, LT. H. SUNDELL, LT. C. PLATTS, LT. J. BENHAM.*

*Third Row — LT. F. BATTERSHILL, LT. CODE, LT. F. MYLES, LT. D. CAMPBELL, LT. D. GLASGOW, LT. J. MITCHELL, CAPT. B. ROBERTSON, CAPT. E. HORTON, CAPT. B. STRACHAN.*

*Second Row — CAPT. G. I. JAMES, CAPT. C. WILKES, CAPT. R. CALDWELL, LT. S. KETCHEN, LT. W. SPEECHLY, LT. R. MOGLOVE, LT. D. OSBORNE, LT. W. AITKEN, LT. R. OGLETREE, CAPT. W. WAY.*

*First Row — LT. K. OXENHAM, CAPT. J. CARVELL, MAJOR L. FULTON, MAJOR R. FULTZ, LT.-COL. J. MELDRAM, MAJOR J. JONES, MAJOR F. HODGE, CAPT. P. GOWER, CAPT. J. HALE.*

## Royal Winnipeg Rifles







"D" DAY OFFICERS 1 BN. UTRECHT, HOLLAND  
D PLUS 1 YEAR, JUNE, 1945

*Top* — CAPT. R. OGLETREE.

*Second Row* — CAPT. S. KETCHEN, CAPT. W. AITKEN, CAPT. A. BEIBER, MAJOR D. CAMPBELL.

*First Row* — MAJOR F. BATTERSHILL, MAJOR J. CARVELL, LT.-COL. L. FULTON, MAJOR C. PLATTS, CAPT. W. LUND.

## Barton Stacey Nov 43





# from here and there...



*Wartime RSM J. Austin, MC  
masquerading as a RCR.*

*H.M. King George VI wishes Col. Jahn Meldram and the regiment good luck prior  
to "D" Day. Brig. Harry Foster looks on.*





*Nearly 150 years service between them  
and still active in the regiment.*

W.O. I J. PAISLEY, ED

W.O. II J. COOGAN, ED

W.O. II W. WERRY, ED

SGT. E. WALTON, ED



*March Past  
of the 1st Bn.  
when they said goodbye  
to the people of  
Ede, Holland.  
On the jeep saluting base  
is Lt.-Col. L. R. Fulton.*





LT.-COL. LOCKY FULTON, DSO  
Near Soulangy



*Major Gen. N. E. Rodger,  
GOC Prairie Command,  
conducting a recent annual inspection with  
Lt.-Col. C. S. Platts and  
Brig. O. M. M. Kay.*



THE ORIGINAL REGIMENTAL CREST

LT.-COL. W. W. THOMPSON





*Former Commanding Officers are entertained at Minto Armouries  
— 1953.*

*LT.-COL. A. W. MORLEY, LT.-COL. G. F. DUDLEY, LT.-COL. G. I. JAMES, LT.-COL. D. CAMPBELL, LT.-COL. G. O'GRADY, LT.-COL. C. S. PLATTS, LT.-COL. K. C. BEDSON, LT.-COL. W. W. THOMPSON.*

*Cadet corps instructors at presentation of Thampsan Memorial Trophy.*

*L. to R.: Lt. R. Maley, Major H. Badger, MC, M. R. Thompson.*

*Cadet Capt. J. Jordon, Capt. G. Andrews.*





# Commanding Officers

**1883**  
**1958**

LT.-COL. W. N. KENEDY  
1883 — 1885

LT.-COL. A. McKEAND  
1885 — 1887

LT.-COL. C. M. BOSWELL  
1887 — 1895

LT.-COL. H. M. RUTTAN  
1895 — 1900

LT.-COL. H. W. A. CHAMBRE  
1900 — 1905

LT.-COL. T. H. BILLMAN  
1905 — 1911

LT.-COL. J. W. de C O'GRADY  
1911 — 1914

LT.-COL. L. J. LIPSETT  
1914 — 1915

LT.-COL. H. H. MATHEWS  
1915 — 1916

LT.-COL. K. C. BEDSON  
1916

LT.-COL. J. M. PROWER  
1916 — 1918

LT.-COL. T. H. RADDALL  
1918

LT.-COL. A. L. SAUNDERS  
1918 — 1919

LT.-COL. A. W. MORLEY  
1919 — 1924

LT.-COL. C. C. WANSBROUGH  
1924 — 1927

LT.-COL. G. F. DUDLEY  
1927 — 1935

LT.-COL. G. F. de C O'GRADY  
1935 — 1938

LT.-COL. J. K. BELL  
1938 — 1941

LT.-COL. W. J. BINGHAM  
1941 — 1942

LT.-COL. T. G. GIBSON  
1942

LT.-COL. W. J. MOOGCK  
1942

LT.-COL. J. M. MELDRAM  
1942 — 1944

LT.-COL. L. R. FULTON  
1944 — 1946

LT.-COL. W. W. THOMPSON  
1946 — 1947

LT.-COL. G. I. JAMES  
1947 — 1952

LT.-COL. D. CAMPBELL  
1952 — 1953

LT.-COL. C. S. PLATTIS  
1953 — Present

2nd BN.

LT.-COL. J. E. TULLOCH  
1940 — 1944

LT.-COL. W. W. THOMPSON  
1944 — 1947

3rd BN.

LT.-COL. C. MILLAR  
1942 — 1943

4th BN. C.O.F.

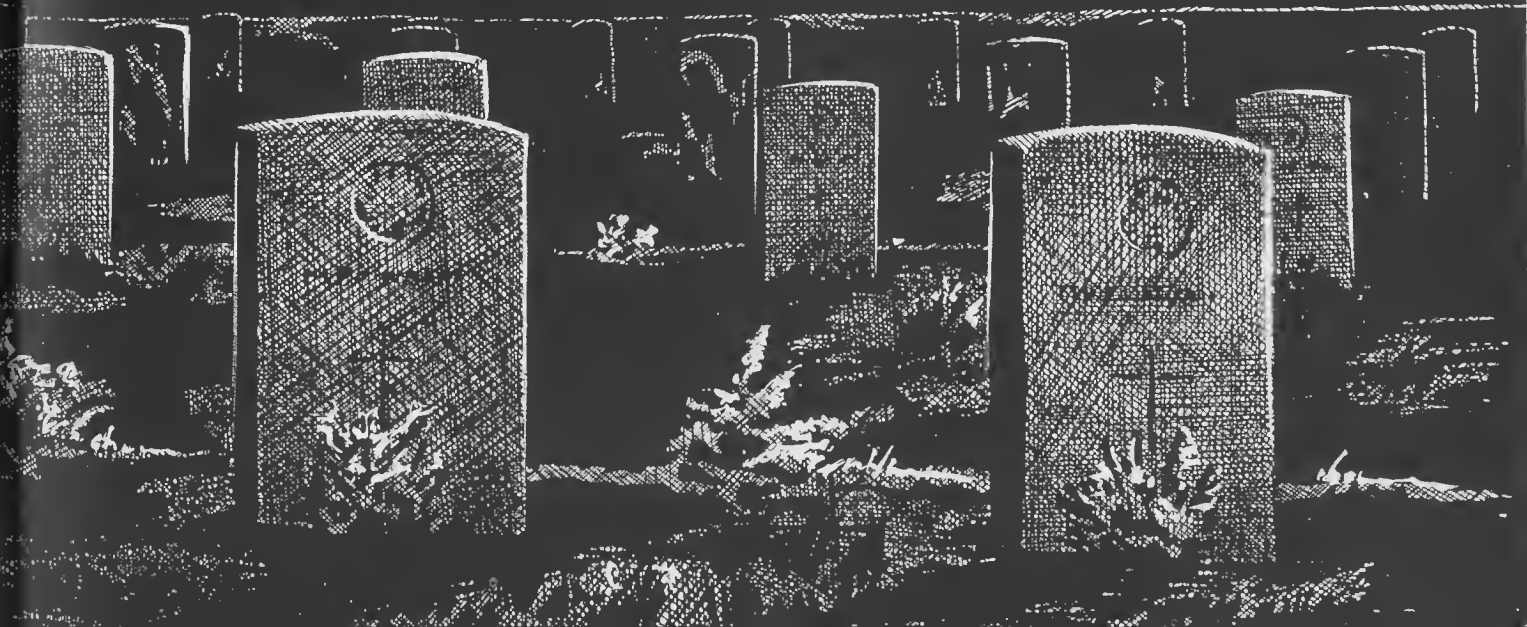
LT.-COL. R. P. CLARK  
1945 — 1946





For

the whole world  
is the sepulchre  
of brave men—









B38655

